

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 H-03 SAM-01 AGR-20

INT-08 RSC-01 DRC-01 /066 W
----- 057514

R 221425Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6626
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 1224

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EIND, EAGR, HO, US

SUBJ: LUMBER: MADERERA HIBUERAS - ROBINSON LUMBER COMPANY

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 767

SUMMARY: MR. SAMUEL ROBINSON OF MADERERA HIBUERAS CALLED ON ECOM OFFICER MARCH 20 AND STATED HE HAD REACHED WORKING AGREEMENT WITH COHDEFOR. AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR CONTINUED OPERATION ROBINSON INTERESTS IN HONDURAS AS FULLY U.S. OWNED COMPANY PERFORMING SERVICES FOR COHDEFOR ON FEE BASIS. END SUMMARY.

1. MR. ROBINSON STATED THAT COHDEFOR HAD PURCHASED HIS ENTIRE INVENTORY OF COMPLETED, EXPORTABLE LUMBER. UNDER NEW MODE OF OPERATION ROBINSON COMPANY WILL CONTINUE TO SIZE, TREAT, KILN AND PREPARE FOR EXPORT LUMBER PROVIDED TO MADERERA HIBUERAS BY COHDEFOR. ROBINSON WILL PURCHASE THIS EXPORTABLE LUMBER AT THE PIER. HIS PROCESSING OPERATION WILL BE ON A FEE BASIS. ROBINSON NEED NOT DIVEST HIMSELF OF ANY PORTION OF HIS PRESENT REAL-ESTATE OR EQUIPMENT HOLDINGS SINCE HE WILL BE CONSIDERED A CONTRACTOR PROVIDING A SERVICE TO A GOVERNMENT CORPORATION. HIS UNDERSTANDING IS THAT HE WILL HANDLE 25 MILLION BOARD FEET
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OF LUMBER DURING 1974, SOMEWHAT LESS THAN IN 1973.

2. COHDEFOR HAS ASSURED ROBINSON THAT DEBTS OWED BY SAW MILLS TO MADERERA HIBUERAS WILL BE COLLECTED BY COHDEFOR AND PAID TO ROBINSON. ROBINSON'S PROBLEMS ON 20 PERCENT WITHHOLDING IN MOTION TOWARD SOLUTION BUT SUBJECT TO PROBABLE BUREAUCRATIC DELAYS.

3. MR. ROBINSON STATED THAT HE FEELS HE HAS "CAPITULATED" BUT THAT COHDEFOR HAS CHANGED ITS POINT OF VIEW GREATLY SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN EARLY JANUARY AS IT HAS COME TO REALIZE THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE LUMBER BUSINESS AND THE IMPORTANT FUNCTION THAT FIRMS SUCH AS ROBINSON'S PROVIDE.

4. TAX PROBLEMS OF ROBINSON'S COMPANY AND PREDECESSORS ARE WELL IN HAND BUT RAPID SOLUTION NOT EXPECTED. MR. ROBINSON'S CURRENT BELIEF IS THAT TAX AUTHORITIES ARE NOT ATTEMPTING TO EXPROPRIATE HIS OPERATION.

5. EMBASSY VIEWS THIS DEVELOPMENT AS IMPORTANT STEP TOWARD RESOLUTION OF GENERAL PROBLEM OF U.S. COMPANIES UNDER DECREE 103. FUTURE TRIBULATIONS ARE CERTAIN IN ANY CASE SUCH AS MADERERA HIBUERAS BUT THE FEVER CRISIS HAS PASSED. WE BELIEVE THE RESOLUTION TO DATE FULLY SUPPORTS THE POSITION TAKEN BY THE DEPT. IN RESPONSE TO INQUIRIES ON THE ROBINSON LUMBER COMPANY PROBLEMS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LUMBER, INDUSTRY, FORESTRY, PROCUREMENT, AGREEMENTS, FOREIGN INVESTMENTS, TAX ASSESSMENTS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TEGUCI01224
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740062-0389
From: TEGUCIGALPA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740320/aaaaatit.tel
Line Count: 87
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: TEGUCIGALPA 767
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 AUG 2002 by elbezefj>; APPROVED <10 DEC 2002 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LUMBER: MADERERA HIBUERAS - ROBINSON LUMBER COMPANY
TAGS: EIND, EAGR, HO, US, ROBINSON LUMBER COMPANY, (ROBINSON, SAMUEL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005